

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 4-13, 15-19, and 21-24 were presented for examination in the present application and remain pending for consideration upon entry of the instant response. The listing of claims is provided herewith for the convenience of the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to the subject matter of the non-elected claims.

The Office Action requires restriction under PCT Rule 13.1 between the process of Group I (claims 1-2 and 4-10) and the product of Group II (claims 11-13, 15-19, and 22-24).

Applicants elect, with traverse, the invention of Group I, which includes claims 1-2 and 4-10.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action, in asserting that the claims fail to relate to a single general inventive concept, has focused on differences within the claims but has failed to consider the common features, namely the common inventive concept as required by PCT Rule 13.1.

Moreover, if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. See MPEP 803.

Applicants respectfully submit that searching elected Group I is likely to result in finding art pertinent to non-elected Group II. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that searching and examining the subject matter of the non-elected groups, along with elected Group I, does not place a serious burden on the Examiner. Accordingly,

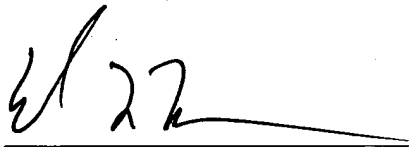
Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the Requirement for Restriction with regard to Group II.

Accordingly, Applicants request examination of Group II along with the examination of elected Group I.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for examination. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and passage of this application to allowance.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. McMahon', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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